

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



MLPA Guidelines for Marine Protected Area Planning

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Guidelines for MPA Planning

- **California Marine Life Protection Act**
- *California Marine Life Protection Act Master Plan for Marine Protected Areas*
- California Department of Fish and Game feasibility criteria
- California State Parks design guidelines
- MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force policy guidance



Marine Life Protection Act

- Directs state to “reexamine and redesign California’s MPA system”
- Defines marine protected area (MPA), “biogeographical regions,” etc.
- Outlines components of master plan
- Provides for creation of a science team
- Identifies kinds of information to consider
- Provides for adaptive management
- Outlines six distinct goals for a Marine Life Protection Program



Goals of the MLPA

- (1) To protect the natural diversity and abundance of marine life, and the structure, function, and integrity of marine ecosystems.
- (2) To help sustain, conserve, and protect marine life populations, including those of economic value, and rebuild those that are depleted.
- (3) To improve recreational, educational, and study opportunities provided by marine ecosystems that are subject to minimal human disturbance, and to manage these uses in a manner consistent with protecting biodiversity.
- (4) To protect marine natural heritage, including protection of representative and unique marine life habitats in California waters for their intrinsic value.
- (5) To ensure that California's MPAs have clearly defined objectives, effective management measures, and adequate enforcement, and are based on sound scientific guidelines.
- (6) To ensure that the state's MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a network.



MLPA Network Guidelines

- “MPAs are designed and managed, to the extent possible, as a network”
- Recommended alternative MPA proposals
- “Improved marine life reserve component”
- “Analysis of the state’s current MPAs”
- “Adaptive management of the MPA network”
- “Individual MPAs may serve varied primary purposes while collectively achieving the overall goals”



Further MLPA Guidelines

- Each MPA should have “identified goals and objectives”
- Reserve component encompass a “representative variety of marine habitat types and communities across a range of depths and environmental conditions ”
- Similar habitats and communities replicated in more than one marine reserve in each biogeographical region
- “Activities that upset the natural ecological functions...are avoided”
- Adequate size, number, type of protection, and location to meet individual MPA objectives and MLPA goals



Habitats and Species in the MLPA

- “Extent and types of habitat that should be represented in the MPA system”
- Habitat types to include: “Rocky reefs, intertidal zones, sandy or soft bottoms, underwater pinnacles, sea mounts, kelp forests, submarine canyons, and seagrass beds”
- Calls for a list of “species or groups of species likely to benefit from MPAs”



Additional Sources of Input

- Engage other experts including “scientists, commercial and recreational fishermen, divers, and other individuals knowledgeable about the state’s underwater ecosystems, the history of fishing effort or MPA management, or other relevant subjects”
- Incorporate “information and views provided by people who live in the area and other interested parties, including economic information, to the extent possible”
- Confer “with the United States Navy regarding issues related to its activities.”